

University of Northern Colorado

ANT 355-001: Medical Anthropology

Spring 2016

Tuesdays & Thursdays 2-3:15pm

Professor Whitney L. Duncan

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Office: Candelaria 2263

Office Hours: 11am-12:00pm and 2-3:30pm Tues/Thurs and by appointment

Description

Medical anthropology is the study of health, illness, and healing across sociocultural contexts. Drawing on contemporary theory and ethnography from a number of settings, we will investigate problems such as the following: how culture affects experience, treatment, and outcome of illness and disease; how individuals and communities navigate different medical systems; the personal, social, and cultural meanings of illness; experiences of distress; how social forces (e.g. inequality, gender, violence, immigration) contribute to illness; how historic, economic, and political trends impact global health and distribution of disease; and the globalization of biomedicine. We will also be conducting an engaged research project in the local community so students get hands-on experience with research and community engagement.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, students should be able to demonstrate a strong grasp of:

- The main theoretical currents in contemporary medical anthropology & how to apply theory to substantive cases;
- How culture influences conceptions, experiences, and outcomes of illness and healing;
- The social determinants of illness and distress;
- Health inequities and their relation to economic inequality, ethnicity, gender, and nationality;
- Variation in global health systems;
- The impacts of globalizing Euroamerican medical ideologies, concepts, and technologies;
- Anthropological approaches to culture and cultural processes;
- Methods commonly used by cultural anthropologists: participant observation, interviewing, ethnographic description, comparison;
- How to critically analyze and synthesize arguments and solve problems through research/scholarship in anthropology.
- The basics of anthropological fieldwork, analysis, and presentation of data and results.

Readings

Course readings will consist of articles and chapters provided on Blackboard ("BB" on syllabus), via printout, and the following books, which you are required to purchase or check out from a library:

- 1) Fadiman, Anne (1997). The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- 2) Holmes, Seth (2013). Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- 3) Erickson, Pamela (2008). Ethnomedicine. Long Grove Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc.

Assignments & Grading

Grades will be a function of attendance and participation (15%), in-class exercises and quizzes (25%), community engagement course project (45%), and a final exam (15%). The course project and final exam must be completed to pass the course.

- A. Attendance and participation (15%). You are expected to attend each class session (always bring assigned readings) and participate regularly in class discussion. Attendance will be taken at random and your participation grade will be lowered 5 points for each unexcused absence. Excused absences are those which have been approved by the instructor ahead of time (except in cases of emergency) and are accompanied by appropriate documentation (e.g. a doctor's note).
- B. In-class exercises and quizzes (25%). To make sure you keep up with and understand the readings, there will be frequent in-class writing exercises and quizzes. An example of an in-class writing exercise is to write a paragraph on the main ideas of a particular reading (due that day) and reflect on how it connects to another class reading. Some exercises may be completed in groups; others are individual. Quizzes may be short answer, multiple choice/true false, and/or essay questions. If you are not present for an in-class exercise or quiz and your absence is not excused (see above), you receive a "0" on the exercise or quiz—no exceptions. If you are not present for an in-class exercise or quiz and your absence is excused with appropriate documentation only, you may work with the professor to make up what you missed. Your lowest quiz/in-class exercise score will be dropped at the end of the semester.
- C. Community Engagement Fieldwork: Project HealthViews Colorado Course Project (45%). As a class, we will be conducting an engaged research project called "Project HealthViews Colorado." In groups, you will conduct interviews with patients at Salud Family Health Centers. Most of these interviews will take place during Weeks 5-11 of the course, and will explore how Coloradans understand and make decisions about their health and medical treatment seeking. During the data collection phase, you will visit the fieldsites several times and keep fieldnotes about your experiences. Groups will enter the interview data into a database, analyze it, and produce two final products: (1) a research report which will be posted online and provided to Salud Family Health Centers, and (2) a presentation that will be given in class and/or at the UNC Research Day in April. Groups will decide on their own how to divide the labor equally. Please see the description of the assignment (provided separately) for details on the requirements and research process.
- D. Final Exam (15%) The take-home final exam will cover lectures, films, and assigned readings. It will consist of short answers and essay questions. It's due during exam week.

Grading Scale:

93-100	A	4.000
90-92	A-	3.667
88-89	B+	3.334
83-87	B	3.000
80-82	B-	2.667
78-79	C+	2.334
73-77	C	2.000
70-72	C-	1.667
68-69	D+	1.334
63-67	D	1.000
60-62	D-	0.667
0-59	F	0.000

Expectations & Policies

- Complete all readings prior to class
- No unexcused absences
- Arriving late/leaving early will result in lowered participation grade
- Active participation, involvement in discussion
- Respect for others
- Cell phones off! No checking email, Facebook, texting

Administration

Academic Dishonesty (source: *CSU-Pueblo Catalog*): Academic dishonesty is any form of cheating which results in students giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise or receiving credit for work which is not their own. Any academic dishonesty is grounds for dismissal. Any student judged to be engaged in cheating or plagiarizing may receive a failing grade for the course, or any other penalty which the instructor finds appropriate. Academic dishonesty is a behavioral issue, not an issue of academic performance. As such, it is considered an act of misconduct and is also subject to UNC disciplinary process.

Acts of Dishonesty include:

1. Cheating—intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours.
2. Fabrication—intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of information or citation in an academic exercise.
3. Facilitating Academic Dishonesty—intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the institutional code of academic integrity.
4. Plagiarism—the deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person as one's own without acknowledgement.
5. Unauthorized Collaboration—intentionally sharing information or working together in an academic exercise when such actions are not approved by the course instructor.

In short, any research or work you do must be yours, and that means proper credit must be given to the work and scholarship of those whom you use in your assignments. I will accept any recognized form of citation (eg, Chicago, MLA, etc.).

ADA Statement:

Any student requesting disability accommodation for this class must inform the instructor giving appropriate notice. Students are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services at (970) 351-2289 to certify documentation of disability and to ensure appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

Assignments and reading schedule are subject to change.

****All readings for the week must be completed by class on Thursday at the latest****

Week 1 (1/12-1/14)

Foundations of Medical Anthropology

- **Readings**
 - *Ethnomedicine* Chapter 1: What is Ethnomedicine?
 - BB readings:

- McElroy, A. 1996. "Medical Anthropology," from *Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology*.
- BB: Kleinman, Arthur; Leon Eisenberg; and Byron Good. 1978. "Culture, Illness, and Care: Clinical Lessons from Anthropologic and Cross-Cultural Research." *Annals of Internal Medicine* 88: 251-258.

Week 2 (1/19-1/21)

Foundations of Theory

- **Readings**
 - *Ethnomedicine* Chapter 2: Historical Origins of Medical Systems (and get started on *The Spirit Catches You*)
 - BB: Chapter 2 of Reimagining Global Health: "Unpacking Global Health: Theory and Critique"
- In-class exercise: Explanatory Models + Getting started with Project HealthViews

Week 3 (1/26-1/28)

Ethnomedicine & Biomedicine

- **Readings**
 - First ½ of *The Spirit Catches You* (pgs. 1-153)

Week 4 (2/2-2/4)

Medicalization & Meaning

- **Readings**
 - Finish *The Spirit Catches You* (pgs. 154-288)
 - *Ethnomedicine* Chapter 3: What Causes Disease?
- In-class film: *The Split Horn*
- In-class exercise: Project HealthViews group meetings + interviewing practice

Week 5 (2/9-2/11)

Cultural Competency in Medical Practice

- **Readings**
 - *Ethnomedicine* Chapter 4 (The Geography of Disease Causation Theories) and Chapter 5 (The Healing Lessons of Ethnomedicine)
 - BB readings (note: they're both quite short):
 - Hunt, Linda M. and Katherine B. de Voogd. 2005. "Clinical Myths of the Cultural 'Other': Implications for Latino Patient Care." *Academic Medicine* 80(10): 918-924.
 - Kleinman, Arthur and Peter Benson. 2006. "Anthropology in the Clinic: The Problem of Cultural Competency and How to Fix it." *PLoS Medicine* 3(10): 1673-1676.
- In-class media analysis: "Voodoo Death and How the Mind Harms the Body," by Daphne Chen, *Atlantic Monthly* and "In the Hospital, A Bad Translation Can Destroy A Life," by Kristian Foden-Vencil, *NPR News*

Week 6 (2/16-2/18)

- Tentative: Group visits to Salud Family Health Centers
- Get ahead on *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies*

Week 7 (2/23-2/25)

Migrant Health & Political Economy

- **Readings:**
 - *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies* pgs. xi-110
- Tentative: Group visits to Salud Family Health Centers
- Tentative in-class film: Unnatural Causes

Week 8 (3/1-3/3):

Migrant Health

- **Readings**
 - *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies* pgs. 111-198

Week 9 (3/8-3/10)

Migrant Health, Transnational Families, and the Politics of Humanitarianism

- **Readings**
 - BB: Yarris, Kristin (2014). "Pensando Mucho ("Thinking too Much"): Embodied Distress Among Grandmothers in Nicaraguan Transnational Families." *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* 38(3): 473-498.
 - AND CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:
 - BB: James, Eric (2011). "Haiti, Insecurity, and the Politics of Asylum." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 25(3): 357-376
 - OR
 - BB: Willen, Sarah (2011). "Do 'Illegal' Im/migrants Have a Right to Health? Engaging Ethical Theory as Social Practice at a Tel Aviv Open Clinic." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 25(3): 303-330.
- In-class guest speaker (via Skype): Kristin Yarris, University of Oregon
 - Tuesday, 3/8: Bring questions to class about "Pensando Mucho" for Dr. Yarris

Week 10 SPRING BREAK – Enjoy!

Week 11 (3/22-3/24)

Culture, Mental Health, & Ethnopsychiatry

- **Readings**
 - BB: Benedict, Ruth. 1934. "Anthropology and the Abnormal." *Journal of General Psychology* 10: 59-82.
 - BB: "A Mad World," by Joseph Pierre, Aeon Magazine
- Tentative: Group visits to Salud Family Health Centers
- ****Due Tuesday, 3/22: Data Entry****

Week 12 (3/29-3/31)

No reading; Work on Preliminary Findings Report and Presentations!

Week 13 (4/5-4/7) (Research Day on Thurs, 4/7)

No reading; Work on Preliminary Analysis & Research Day Presentations!

Tuesday class will meet as normal; in groups, you'll work on your presentations. Thursday, if our panels are accepted, you'll be presenting at UNC Research Day! (details to come)

- *****Due Tuesday, 4/5: Analysis and Preliminary Findings Report + presentation draft*****
- *****Due Thursday, 4/7: Group Presentations @ Research Day!*****

Week 14 (4/12-4/14)

Culture, Mental Health, & Ethnopsychiatry Continued

- **Readings**
 - BB: Obeyesekere, Gananath. 1985. "Depression, Buddhism, and the Work of Culture in Sri Lanka." In *Culture and depression: Studies in the anthropology and cross-cultural psychiatry of affect and disorder*. Kleinman, Arthur and Byron J. Good, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp: 134-152.
 - Two short media articles:
 - BB: "Suicides Spread Through a Brazilian Tribe," by Charles Lyons, New York Times
 - BB: Luhrmann, Tanya (2014). "Is the World More Depressed?" New York Times.
- In-class video: Hidden Pictures: A Personal Journey into Global Mental Health and/or Vikram Patel on Mental Health for All

Week 15 (4/19-4/21)

Culture, Mental Health, & Ethnopsychiatry Continued

- **Readings**
 - BB: "Brain Gain," by Margaret Talbot, The New Yorker Magazine
 - Tentative In-class film: "The Medicated Child"

Mandatory in-class group meetings and analysis; Research Reports due next week!

Week 16 (4/26-4/28)

- *****Due Tuesday, 4/28: Research Reports & Fieldnote Journals*****

Week 17 FINAL EXAM WEEK

Take-home exam due Thursday, 5/5 – come by my office, hour to be determined